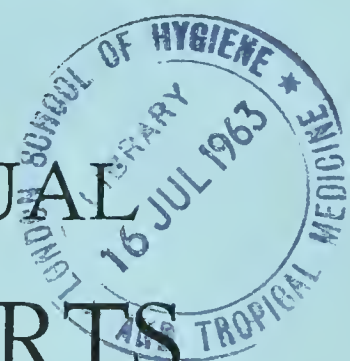


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Luton Rural District Council

ANNUAL REPORTS



of

Medical Officer of Health



and

Public Health Inspector

for the

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Luton Rural District Council

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To the Luton Rural District Council

Medical Officer's Annual Report, 1957

The Chairman and Councillors of the
Rural District of Luton.

5th January, 1959.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This statistical Report follows the same lines as previous ones. The year was a healthy one and practically free from infectious diseases. Two cases of Poliomyelitis were notified and there was an epidemic of Measles. 58 cases of Sonnei Dysentery were notified chiefly in the Sundon Park area.

The high number of births in the District is noteworthy, the figure rising from 409 in 1956 to 495 in 1957.

I wish to acknowledge with thanks the help that has always been given to me by the Clerk to the Council and the Public Health Inspectors.

I have the honour to be,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

H. A. A. PARGETER,

Medical Officer of Health,
Rural District of Luton.

SECTION A. — Statistics and Social Conditions.

1. Vital Statistics.

Area of district	...	...	...	...	...	...	48,051 acres
Population as estimated by Registrar-General	...	...	...	...	...	...	23,500
Number of inhabited houses (approximate)	...	...	...	...	...	...	7,700
Rateable value as at 1st April 1957	...	...	...	...	...	...	£235,353
Product of Penny Rate	...	...	...	...	...	...	£969
Number of new houses erected:							
(a) Council	...	...	...	...	...	...	44
(b) Private enterprise	...	...	...	...	...	...	373

Extracts from vital statistics for the year.

The following table gives extracts from the Vital Statistics of the year 1957 as furnished by the Registrar General:—

Live Births :	<i>Total</i>			<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>
	495			259	236
	Legitimate ...			243	223
	Illegitimate			16	13
	Birth Rate per 1,000 of population ...			Crude Rate	21.1
				Adjusted Rate	20.7

Still Births :	<i>Total</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>
Legitimate ...	8	4	4
Illegitimate	1	—	1
Rate per 1,000 (live and still births) ...	17.9		

Deaths :	<i>Total</i>			<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>
	209			120	89
	Death Rate per 1,000 of population ...			Crude Rate	8.9
				Adjusted Rate	10.1

There were no maternal deaths during 1957.

Deaths of Infants under one year of age:—

Total	...	11	Rate per 1,000 live births	...	22.2
Legitimate	...	10	Rate per 1,000 Legitimate live births	...	21.5
Illegitimate	...	1	Rate per 1,000 Illegitimate live births	...	34.5
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	...	...	...	...	—
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	...	...	...	—
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under two years of age)	...	...	...	...	—
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	...	...	...	...	41

Note.—Adjusted birth and death rates are obtained by multiplying the 'crude' rate by the area comparability factors supplied from the General Register Office. These factors in the Luton Rural District are — births, 0.98; deaths, 1.13.

2. Population.

The population figures as supplied by the Registrar-General for the last 7 years are as follows:—

1951	...	...	...	19,460
1952	...	...	...	19,710
1953	...	...	...	19,770
1954	...	...	...	20,090
1955	...	...	...	20,690
1956	...	...	...	22,530
1957	...	...	...	23,500

The natural increase in the population or difference between the birth and death rates are as follows:—

1951	...	...	...	5.1
1952	...	...	...	6.1
1953	...	...	...	5.7
1954	...	...	...	6.3
1955	...	...	...	8.1
1956	...	...	...	9.8
1957	...	...	...	12.2

3 & 4. Birth and Death Rates.

Year	Population	Births	Birth Rate	Birth Rate for England & Wales	Deaths	Crude Death Rate	Death Rate for England & Wales
1951	19,460	304	15.3	15.5	203	10.2	12.5
1952	19,710	308	15.3	15.3	187	9.3	11.3
1953	19,770	309	15.6	15.5	197	9.9	11.4
1954	20,090	325	16.2	15.2	198	9.9	11.3
1955	20,690	385	18.6	15.0	217	10.5	11.7
1956	22,530	409	18.2	15.7	189	8.4	11.7
1957	23,500	495	21.1	16.1	209	8.9	12.0

BIRTH RATES, DEATH RATES, ANALYSIS OF MORTALITY, MATERNAL DEATH RATES AND CASE RATES FOR CERTAIN INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN THE YEAR 1957.

(England & Wales)

(Provisional figures based on Weekly and Quarterly Returns)

								LUTON RURAL DISTRICT	ENGLAND AND WALES
								Rates per 1,000 Civilian Population	
Live Births	..	...	...	...	...	...	...	21.1	16.1
Deaths :									
All Causes	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8.9	11.5
Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	0.00
Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	0.00
Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.13	0.11
Influenza	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.04	0.15
Smallpox	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Acute Poliomyelitis (including Polioencephalitis)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	0.01
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.59	0.52
Notifications :									
Typhoid Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	0.00
Paratyphoid Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	0.00
Meningococcal Infection	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	0.02
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.13	0.66
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.11	1.88
Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	0.00
Erysipelas	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	0.07
Smallpox	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	0.00
Measles	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8.26	14.11
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5.53	0.73
Acute Poliomyelitis, Paralytic	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.08	0.07
Acute Poliomyelitis, Non-Paralytic	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	0.03
Food Poisoning	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.21	0.23
Dysentery	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2.47	0.64
								Rates per 1,000 live births	
Deaths under 1 year of age	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	22.3	23.0†
Deaths from Diarrhoea and Enteritis under 2 years of age	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	0.4
								Rates per 1,000 total births (live and still)	
(a) Still Births	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	17.9	22.4
(b) Notifications :									
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	16.00
(c) Maternal Mortality :									
Sepsis of Pregnancy, Childbirth and the Puerperium	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Other Toxaemias of Pregnancy	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	0.08
Abortion with Toxaemia	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—
Abortion with Sepsis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—
Abortion without Sepsis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—
Other complications of Pregnancy, Childbirth and Puerperium	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	0.47

A dash (—) signifies that there were no deaths or notifications.

† Per 1,000 related births.

6. Infant Mortality.

The following table shows deaths of infants from stated causes in weeks and months under one year of age.

			Weeks				Total under one month	Months				Total under one year
			0-	1-	2-	3-		1-	3-	6-	9-	
Prematurity	...	...	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	3
Atelectasis	...	...	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
Birth Injury	...	...	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	2
Congenital Deformities	...	...	1	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	2
Hydrocephalus	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1
Broncho Pneumonia	...	...	—	1	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	2
TOTALS	...	...	7	1	—	—	8	1	1	—	1	11

DEATHS OF RESIDENTS IN THE RURAL DISTRICT OF LUTON DURING THE YEAR 1957.

<i>Causes of Death</i>					<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>
1.	Tuberculosis, respiratory	...	...	...	3	—
2.	Tuberculosis, other	...	...	...	1	—
3.	Syphilitic disease	...	...	...	—	—
4.	Diphtheria	...	...	...	—	—
5.	Whooping Cough	...	...	...	—	—
6.	Meningococcal infections	...	...	...	—	—
7.	Acute poliomyelitis	...	...	...	—	—
8.	Measles	...	...	...	—	—
9.	Other infective and parasitic diseases	...	...	...	—	—
10.	Malignant neoplasm, stomach	...	...	...	2	3
11.	Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus	...	...	...	6	1
12.	Malignant neoplasm, breast	...	...	...	—	9
13.	Malignant neoplasm, uterus	...	...	...	—	1
14.	Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	...	...	...	11	8
15.	Leukaemia, aleukaemia	...	...	...	—	—
16.	Diabetes	...	...	...	—	—
17.	Vascular lesions of nervous system	...	...	...	19	17
18.	Coronary disease, angina	...	...	...	17	6
19.	Hypertension with heart disease	...	...	...	—	3
20.	Other heart disease	...	...	...	18	8
21.	Other circulatory disease	...	...	...	2	2
22.	Influenza	...	...	...	1	—
23.	Pneumonia	...	...	...	7	7
24.	Bronchitis	...	...	...	6	2
25.	Other diseases of respiratory system	...	...	...	1	3
26.	Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	...	...	...	2	—
27.	Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	...	...	...	1	1
28.	Nephritis and nephrosis	...	...	...	2	—
29.	Hyperplasia of prostate	...	...	...	3	—
30.	Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	...	...	...	—	—
31.	Congenital malformations	...	...	...	2	2
32.	Other defined and ill-defined diseases	...	...	...	7	11
33.	Motor vehicle accidents	...	...	...	3	—
34.	All other accidents	...	...	...	2	3
35.	Suicide	...	...	...	4	1
36.	Homicide and operations of war	...	...	...	—	1
TOTALS					120	89

COMPARATIVE STATISTICS FOR 1948-1957

Year	LIVE BIRTHS			STILL BIRTHS			DEATHS			INFANT DEATHS			MATERNAL DEATHS			
	Estimated Population	No.	Rate per 1,000 estimated population	No.	Rate per 1,000 total births	No.	Rate per 1,000 estimated population	Under 4 weeks	4 weeks to 12 months	Total	Rate per 1,000 live births	Number			Rate per 1,000 total births	
												Sepsis	Other	Total		
1948	18,600	339	18.2	10	28.7	211	11.3	8	6	14	41	—	—	—	—	
1949	18,970	333	17.6	8	23.5	180	9.5	6	2	8	24	1	—	1	2.9	
1950	19,290	324	16.5	10	29.9	212	10.7	12	5	17	52	—	—	—	—	
1951	19,460	304	15.3	6	19.4	203	10.2	2	1	3	10	—	—	—	—	
1952	19,710	308	15.3	3	9.6	187	9.3	4	4	8	25.9	—	2	2	6.4	
1953	19,770	309	15.6	7	32.4	197	9.9	2	2	4	12.9	—	—	—	—	
1954	20,090	325	16.2	1	3.1	198	9.9	3	5	8	24.6	—	—	—	—	
1955	20,690	385	18.6	7	17.9	217	10.5	3	—	3	7.8	—	—	—	—	
1956	22,530	409	18.2	18	42.2	189	8.4	8	2	10	24.1	—	—	—	—	
1957	23,500	495	21.1	9	17.9	209	8.9	8	3	11	22.2	—	—	—	—	

NOTIFIED INFECTIOUS DISEASES (Civilian).

	<i>Under 1 yr.</i>	<i>1 to 2</i>	<i>2 to 3</i>	<i>3 to 4</i>	<i>4 to 5</i>	<i>5 to 9</i>	<i>10 to 14</i>	<i>15 to 24</i>	<i>25 and over</i>	<i>Age Un- known</i>	<i>Total</i>
Scarlet Fever						3					3
Whooping Cough		1	2	4	4	15					26
Ac. Poliomyelitis (Paralytic)								1	1		2
Ac. Poliomyelitis (Non-paralytic)											
Measles (excluding rubella)	3	14	16	27	18	104	11	3	1	2	199
Diphtheria											
Dysentery		3			2	19	12	4	18		58
Meningococcal infection											
Ac. pneumonia						3		2	8		13
Smallpox											
Ac. encephalitis (Infective)								1			1
Ac. encephalitis (Post-Infectious)											
Enteric or Typhoid fever											
Paratyphoid fever											
Erysipelas											
Food poisoning						1		1	3		5
Puerperal Pyrexia											
Ophthalmia neonatorum											
Infective Hepatitis						3	1	2	2	1	9
TOTALS	3	18	18	31	24	148	24	14	33	3	316

TUBERCULOSIS.

NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1957

<i>Age periods</i>	<i>New Cases</i>				<i>Deaths</i>			
	<i>Pulmonary</i>		<i>Non-Pulmonary</i>		<i>Pulmonary</i>		<i>Non-Pulmonary</i>	
	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>
Under 5 years		1						
5 — 14	1			1				
15 — 24		1		1				
25 — 44	4	3		1	1			
45 — 64	2			2	1			
65 and over	1				1		1	
Age unknown								
TOTALS	8	5		5	3		1	

Senior Public Health Inspector's Annual Report

1957

1. (i) WATER SUPPLY.

Main Water.

Mains water supply is now generally available throughout the entire Rural District, only a few isolated houses here and there and a part of the agricultural parish of Hyde being without this amenity. Owners have co-operated satisfactorily as a result of Informal Action and the water service has been taken to an indoor sink where reasonable drainage is available and to an outside standpipe where inadequate drainage arrangements obtain.

A marked improvement in the water supply in the Caddington parish was noted during the year, both in purity and pressure, this of course being due to the parish now being served with water from the Kensworth Lynch Pumping Station.

Public Health Laboratory Reports on samples of mains water bacteriologically examined during the year were as follows:—

Highly Satisfactory	...	...	78
Satisfactory	...	...	4
Slightly Polluted	...	...	1
			<hr/>
			83
			<hr/>

The water supply found to be slightly polluted was obtained from a public standpipe and on 'flaming' the tap the check sample proved to be satisfactory.

Public Standpipes.

These are gradually disappearing from the villages but there are still quite a number in use. However, the Council's policy of providing sewers wherever possible and permissible and the introduction of a water carriage system to the dwelling houses under their control in parishes not yet served by sewers will gradually remove the need for these standpipes and it is hoped that the day is not far distant when the only public standpipes left will be for exhibition as museum pieces and to remind future generations how much they owe to their forebears.

Mains Extensions and Improvements.

The Caddington scheme which has resulted in the provision of a supply of water from the Kensworth Borehole was completed during the year and mains water subsequently extended to the remote hamlet of Chaul End. A mains water extension from Leighton Buzzard was taken to the hamlets of Leedon and Briggington which are in the parish of Eggington. A scheme for the supply of mains water to the Wellhead area in the parish of Eaton Bray was prepared during the year and work on the scheme commenced towards the end of the year.

Private Water Supplies.

A further extension of mains water throughout the District has continued to reduce private supplies. These are kept under observation from time to time and Public Health Laboratory Reports on samples of water from shallow wells, deep wells and in some instances private boreholes have been bacteriologically examined during the year with the following results:—

Highly Satisfactory	...	...	8
Satisfactory	...	...	1
Polluted	...	...	6
			<hr/>
			15
			<hr/>

Where evidence of pollution is found a check sample is obtained and where the pollution is confirmed the necessary steps are taken to have the water supply improved or cause the dwelling house supply to be connected to mains water if such is reasonably available.

1. (ii) DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

The sanitary circumstances relating to these services present quite a different picture to that seen under the report on water supply. It is inevitable that where a village or district has the benefit of an adequate and wholesome water supply that drainage difficulties and Nuisances will arise if such a water supply once having passed through the home is not disposed of in a proper manner. In the areas of Caddington and Warden Hill particularly, the disposal of drainage by means of cesspools has for some years proved quite inadequate and the rapid development of these areas has aggravated the circumstances to such an extent that the Cesspool Emptying Service cannot possibly meet the demands made upon it especially when having regard to the difficulties in finding suitable labour and the almost insoluble factor of finding suitable sites near the areas concerned for the disposal of cesspool emptier contents. The sanitary circumstances at Kensworth, Studham, Sundon and Totternhoe where a good deal of housing development is taking place are not dissimilar from those referred to above although the proportions may be somewhat less, whereas at Tilsworth in particular and to a lesser degree at Eggington, Billington and Hockliffe, drainage into ditches gives rise to conditions which constitute a Nuisance and are not capable of abatement until adequate sewerage is provided.

The sighs of relief heard in the Engineer's and Public Health Departments when the Caddington scheme for sewerage was allowed to proceed during the year, must have been heard in the precincts of Whitehall, although the removal of Woodside and Slip End from the scheme tempered the enthusiasm to some extent. A similar scheme at Tebworth which commenced towards the end of the year also contributes to a brightening future.

During the year 5,989 cesspools were emptied involving 14,709 loads.

The following is an extract from the Council's Engineer and Surveyor's Report for 1957:—

“ Drainage and Sewerage. Although main drainage works have been carried out at Tebworth and Marina Drive, Totternhoe, they have done little to relieve the heavy burden imposed on the cesspool emptying service.

Development in certain Parishes is so rapid and abnormal for a Rural District that at the present time a severe strain is made on this service.

The main localities in which the conditions are serious are Warden Hill, Streatley and Caddington.

Proposals are in hand for main drainage schemes for both these areas and, in fact, the Caddington Scheme has already been commenced. Until these schemes are completed, the service will not be afforded any great relief.

The creation of suitable sites for cesspool contents disposal is also causing concern and numerous complaints are received from time to time. Every endeavour is made by rigid control to see that these tips do not cause offence but unless the continued use of these sites is permitted, the service will be further hindered in an already difficult situation."

1. (iii) PONDS, DITCHES, WATERCOURSES.

The conditions obtaining in these respects makes for very little change on previous years and not until adequate drainage and sewerage is available in all villages will the ponds, ditches and watercourses revert solely to the function for which they were intended and primarily constructed.

2. RIVERS AND STREAMS.

The conditions in this respect are of course directly related to the conditions obtaining in Ditches and Watercourses and where improved drainage has been installed in villages, the position is reflected in the local streams.

3. (i) CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

Satisfactory progress has been maintained at Heath and Reach and Barton in the conversion of earth and pail closets into water closets. In most cases the old closet structure has been completely demolished and new buildings erected, either adjoining the dwelling houses or in some cases inside the houses where practicable and where capable of conforming to the requirements of the Byelaws.

It has not been found necessary to resort to Statutory Action. The dearth of builders in our villages accounts for much of the delay in effecting the necessary improvements to closet accommodation.

3. (ii) PUBLIC CLEANSING.

From the 1st April, 1957, the control of the operational side of the Cleansing Services was returned to the Engineer's Department. Since 1st April, 1947, the control of this side of the work had been under the Public Health Department, whereas the maintenance of the vehicles and supplies had been under the control of the Engineer. On the whole the dual control had worked very well during the intervening years, but with the appointment of a Works Superintendent it became reasonably obvious that dual control was no longer practicable and on my recommendation the Council agreed to the transfer of control to the Engineer's Department which had prior to 1947 exercised unified supervision.

The following is an extract from my Council's Engineer and Surveyor's Report for 1957:—

"Refuse Collection. The increased development taking place in the Rural District and, in particular, the villages which serve as a dormitory for Luton and Dunstable, have made it necessary to reorganise the refuse collection service. This has been done by the use of larger capacity vehicles and additional labour in the areas of recent large scale development and has reduced the number of daily hauls to the respective tips, enabling a greater number of daily collections to be made.

As housing development increases, the number of large capacity vehicles will need to be increased, yet still retaining the smaller type vehicle for use in small villages and along narrow country roads.

In spite of delays due to labour shortage, sickness and holidays, it has been found possible to maintain overall an average 10-12 day collection service.

Refuse Disposal. The Council's Tip at Toddington is now reaching capacity and it will shortly be necessary to obtain other tipping facilities to serve the north eastern section of the District.

The Council's other remaining Tip at Heath and Reach is still being used and refuse is also disposed of at the Luton Borough and Dunstable Borough Tips."

3. (iii) SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

The following is a numerical summary of inspections, re-inspections, investigations, visits, interviews, etc., carried out during the year:—

GENERAL SANITATION

Sewerage and Drainage	...	...	...	1063
Ditches	...	...	...	26
Refuse/Accumulations, Deposits, etc.	...	...	...	40
Water Supply	...	...	...	96
Water Samples	...	...	...	118

NUISANCES

Premises (defects)	...	...	...	246
Filthy or Verminous Premises	...	...	...	1
Disinfestation (Bugs, fleas)	...	...	...	—
„ (Other insects)	...	...	...	26
Animals	...	...	...	13
Smoke and Dust	...	...	...	103
Rodents	...	...	...	181
Miscellaneous Sanitary Visits and Reinspections	...	...	...	162

SPECIAL PREMISES

Factories and Outworkers	...	...	...	9
Knacker's Yards	...	...	...	1
Village Halls, Institutes, etc.	...	...	...	3
Schools	...	...	...	31
Hotels and Public Houses	...	...	...	51
Petroleum	...	...	...	71
Moveable Dwellings	...	...	...	872

FOOD

General Stores	...	...	...	...	72
Butcher's Shops	...	...	...	...	15
Fish Shops and Vehicles	...	...	...	...	7
Bakehouses	...	...	...	...	8
Cafes, Restaurants, etc.	...	...	...	...	40
Meat and Food Inspection	...	...	...	...	1002

MILK AND ICE CREAM

Dairies	...	...	...	...	1
Milk Samples	...	...	...	...	23
Ice Cream Premises	...	...	...	...	4
Ice Cream Samples	...	...	...	...	7

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Investigations	...	...	...	...	228
Disinfections	...	...	...	...	3
Food Poisoning	...	...	...	...	10

CLEANSING SERVICES

HOUSING

Houses Inspected	...	...	...	...	412
Overcrowding	...	...	...	...	7
Reinspections	...	...	...	...	193

MISCELLANEOUS

Burial Acts	...	...	...	...	2
					<hr/> 5306 <hr/>

3. (iv) ABATEMENT OF NUISANCES.

195 Nuisances were abated during the year as a result of informal action. On the whole, Nuisances have been abated within a reasonable time of Informal Notice, verbal or written, to the owner or person by whose act or default the Nuisance arose.

The abatement of conditions which constitute a Nuisance which may be due to the blockage of combined drainage presents more difficulties in effecting abatement than any other factor. This is due to the necessity for approaching all the householders using the combined drainage and where refusal to accept responsibility is met with, extended delays arise. It would appear that by far the most effectual manner of abating this type of Nuisance would be the provision of a service by the Council for the clearance of blockages just as such a service exists for the clearance of stoppages in sewers.

The abatement of Nuisances arising from conditions of disrepair tend to take far more time than should be necessary but this again is due to the shortage of builders in most of our villages. In 4 instances it was found necessary to take Statutory Action in order to effect a satisfactory abatement of Nuisance.

3. (v) MOVEABLE DWELLINGS.

By the end of the year the number of caravans in the District exceeded 500 and a summary of the use of sites and caravans is approximately as follows:—

	No. of Caravan Sites	Caravans in Permanent use	Caravans in Temporary use	Not in use for human habitation
Stationing more than 6 caravans	12	374	48	4
Stationing less than 6 caravans	43	68	5	4
	<hr/> 55 <hr/>	<hr/> 442 <hr/>	<hr/> 53 <hr/>	<hr/> 8 <hr/>

The conditions obtaining on the large sites, by which I mean sites holding more than 20 caravans has continued to improve during the year and generally the standard obtaining on the smaller sites is reasonable, but in order to maintain the position satisfactorily frequent inspections are necessary. There are still several sites in the District which are not subject to Planning Permission and steps are being taken in conjunction with the Council's Planning Officer to impose a more effective control by requiring Planning Permission under the Town and Country Planning Acts.

3. (vi) ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION.

Dust Emission at Houghton Regis, Chalton and Sundon.

The cement and lime industry flourishes on the chalk deposits which traverse the District from Totternhoe on the S.W. boundary to Barton in the N.E. of the District. Associated with this industry, particularly at Houghton Regis, Chalton and Sundon there arises pollution of the air due to the excessive emission of dust. For the purpose of measuring the deposition of dust in these areas, Deposit Gauges are sited in these villages usually at points where dust deposits are fairly evident or in an area from which complaints of the Nuisance have arisen from time to time.

The average monthly total of deposited matter in tons per square mile is as follows:—

Houghton Regis (Malmsey)	Houghton Regis (Rear of High St.)	Chalton	Sundon
51.00	20.70	18.01	27.63
(38.18)	(25.75)	(20.60)	(29.86)

The bracketed figures are averages recorded during 1956. Apart from the Malmsey area the average figures indicate a slight improvement on the previous year.

The conditions in the Malmsey area gradually deteriorated during the year and much of this was doubtless due to the considerable disposal of cement clinker amounting to approximately 30,000 tons which occurred during the trade recession. These very large deposits were made within 400 ft. of dwelling houses on the Malmsey Estate. It is hoped that the covered clinker store which is being erected on the site at the back of the Works will be in use early in 1958 and assurances have been given by the Management that future storage of clinker will not take place in the open but under the cover being erected for the purpose.

The Alkali and Works etc. Inspector is kept fully informed of dust deposits in these areas and monthly reports are issued to him and copies are also sent to the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research. During the year the Council also joined the Conference of Co-operating Bodies for the purpose of investigating atmospheric pollution.

The Alkali Inspector has met the Public Health Committee who are seriously concerned about the position at Houghton Regis and hardly to a lesser extent at Chalton and Sundon and assurances were given by him that improvements being carried out at Houghton Regis should make for a decided abatement of the Nuisance in that area and eventually the provision of means of dust arrestment at the Sundon Works should make for cleaner conditions in that part of the District.

SECTION D — HOUSING.

1. INSPECTION OF DWELLING HOUSES DURING THE YEAR.

(1) (a) Total Number of Dwelling Houses inspected for housing defects (Under Public Health or Housing Acts)	412
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	412
(2) (a) Number of Dwelling Houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 and 1932 ...	—
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	—
(3) Number of Dwelling Houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	43
(4) Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	122
(5) Number of Dwelling Houses found to be satisfactory	8
(6) Number of houses placed in Category 5 (Rural Housing Survey) which were rendered fit for habitation	11

2. REMEDY OF DEFECTS DURING THE YEAR WITHOUT SERVICE OF FORMAL NOTICES.

Number of defective Dwelling Houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	47
--	----

3. ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS DURING THE YEAR.

(1) (a) Proceedings under sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936:	
(1) Number of Dwelling Houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs 	2
(2) Number of Dwelling Houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:	
(a) By owners 	2
(b) By Local Authority in default of owner 	—
(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts:	
(1) Number of Dwelling Houses in respect of which formal notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ...	4
(2) Number of Dwelling Houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:	
(a) By owners 	4
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners ...	—
(1a) Number of Dwelling Houses in respect of which informal notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ...	93
(2a) Number of Dwelling Houses in which defects were remedied after service of of informal notices 	72
(c) Proceedings under sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936:	
(1) Number of Dwelling Houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	23
(2) Number of Dwelling Houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders ...	11
(3) Number of unfit dwelling houses demolished 	11
(d) Proceedings under section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936:	
(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made 	Nil
(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit 	Nil

HOUSING ACT, 1936.
HOUSING ACT, 1957.
Unfit Houses.

The following summarises the results obtained subsequent to procedure under section 11 of the Housing Act 1936:—

	Sec. 11 Formal Action	Demolition Orders	Under- takings Accepted	Rendered Fit	Demo- lished	Informal Demolitions
BARTON	3	3	—	—	3	4
BILLINGTON	—	—	—	—	—	—
CADDINGTON	15	14	1	—	6	—
CHALGRAVE	7	7	—	—	—	2
EATON BRAY	2	2	—	—	2	2
EGGINGTON	—	—	—	—	—	—
HEATH AND REACH ...	—	—	—	2	2	—
HOCKLIFFE	2	—	2	—	—	—
HOUGHTON REGIS ...	8	7	1	—	1	4
HYDE	—	—	—	—	—	4
KENSWORTH	2	2	—	—	1	—
STANBRIDGE	—	—	—	—	—	—
STREATLEY	—	—	—	—	—	4
STUDHAM	2	2	—	—	—	—
SUNDON	2	2	—	—	—	—
TILSWORTH	—	—	—	—	—	—
TODDINGTON	15	13	2	—	9	5
TOTTERNHOE	11	9	2	2	8	3
WHIPSNADE	—	—	—	—	—	2
TOTALS	69	61	8	4	32	31

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.
Number of Food Premises in the Area.

General Stores and Village Shops	...	...	102
Bakehouses	...	...	8
Fish and Chip Shops	...	...	5
Catering Establishments including Cafes, Restaurants, Canteens, etc	...	...	42
Licenced Premises	...	...	70

Ice Cream.

Premises registered under Section 16 of the
Food and Drugs Act 1955 for the storage
and sale of Ice Cream

The premises registered for this purpose consist of 64 General Stores, 7 Catering Premises and 3 rooms set apart at Licenced Premises. 4 further premises were registered for the storage and sale of Ice Cream during the year. In every case the commodity is sold in a pre-packed condition.

3 samples were obtained during the year, 2 of which were Grade 1 and 1 was Grade 2.

Milk — Report on Milk Sampling.

			Total	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Pasterised	...	...	8	8	—
T.T.	...	...	12	12	—
			—	—	—
			20	20	—
			—	—	—

These results are very gratifying and it appears that there has been a steady improvement since all milk sold has had to be designated.

Milk Bottles.

A complaint was received concerning the presence of foreign matter in a bottle of milk delivered to premises. On investigation, the opinion was formed that maggots of some description were present. Complaint was immediately made to the Dairy concerned who expressed their regrets and stated that they took a very serious view of such an incident. There appears to be very little doubt that the contamination was in the bottle all the time and had remained there whilst passing through the normal washing and sterilising processes. The milk processing and bottling equipment including the washer was of modern manufacture and maintained in proper working order. It appears that occasionally bottles are returned by customers in such a condition that the washer does not deal with them effectually. The dairy concerned employed a spotter whose duty it was to remove any bottles which were defective or unsatisfactory in any way and on this occasion it was obvious that the human element was the weak link in the chain.

Numerous instances have been reported where such bottles have been returned from building sites for example with cement and similar substances in the bottom and it has been impossible to use them again.

Further, some people have used them to contain paraffin and other liquids and the dairies have had to destroy such bottles. There is certainly something to be said for the provision of non-returnable containers although it is doubtful whether such could be provided without increasing the cost. In any case it would certainly be interesting to try on a limited basis although the cost of the necessary machinery would possibly make this uneconomical.

Food Premises.

During the year a considerable amount of time was spent on the inspection and supervision of all types of premises in which food has been prepared and sold. It is pleasing to note that there has been a steady improvement, with few exceptions, in the manner of storage and protection from contamination. Improvements which have been carried out have been obtained as a result of informal approaches to owners and managements concerned and it is evident that much more can be achieved by this kind of co-operation rather than by the service of Notices.

In many cases the facilities for cleansing equipment and for ensuring personal hygiene have been improved and gradually the staff employed in food premises are realising that their job is a most important one and that they have a responsibility to the Public to ensure that all food is kept and served in a clean condition. It was found necessary in a few instances to issue warnings to personnel for smoking in such premises and up to the present such warning has proved sufficient, although doubtless such a well established habit has been extremely difficult to cure. The general public themselves can do much to raise this standard by refraining from shopping in premises where unhygienic practices are carried on.

Food Premises — Schools.

A joint inspection was made with the County Health Inspector of all School Canteens. We found that the authority concerned are anxious to ensure that their premises are up to the highest standard, and considerable advances have been made by the provision of washing facilities, refrigerators and other necessary improvements. During the year such premises are subject to routine inspection in the same way as other catering establishments.

Bakehouses.

Of these premises 3 are very old and cannot be regarded as completely satisfactory. In these cases it will involve a considerable amount of expenditure to bring them up to the necessary standard. Up to the present, informal approaches are made to the owners and occupiers concerned and it is anticipated within the next 12 months that such premises will either be closed or completely reconditioned. I would like to add however, that in these cases the general standard of hygiene is satisfactory.

Meat Inspection and Slaughterhouses.

It has been possible to ensure that all animals slaughtered for human consumption in the District have been inspected. It was quite impossible to carry out such inspection at the time of slaughter, but the present arrangement works very well and in this respect there has been no cause for complaint. Since the re-opening of private slaughterhouses there has been a considerable improvement in the cleanliness of the meat produced and a high standard has been maintained. Generally conditions at slaughterhouses are satisfactory with regard to cleanliness and the maintenance of hygienic practices.

The following are the particulars and records of animals killed, inspected, and percentages of disease discovered on inspection:—

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Total
Number killed	823	60	25	2377	1255	4540
Number Inspected	823	60	25	2377	1255	4540
Percentage of number killed which were inspected ..	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

All diseases except
Tuberculosis :

Whole carcasses condemned ...	1	2	—	1	—	4
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned ...	126	12	—	78	91	307
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis ...	15.43	23.33	—	3.32	7.25	6.85

Tuberculosis only :

Whole carcasses condemned ...	—	—	—	1	—	1
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned ...	21	6	—	1	1	29
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuber- culosis	2.55	10%	—	.084	.079	.66

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

The following quantities of foods were voluntarily surrendered on being found to be unfit for human consumption.

Pineapple	...	...	...	...	5 tins
Oranges	...	...	...	...	5 „
Loganberries (16 ozs.)			...	...	3 „
Tomatoes	...	...	...	...	2 „
Cheese	...	...	...	...	16 lbs.
Jam	...	...	...	...	19 „
Sardines	...	...	...	...	3 tins
Luncheon Meat		...	...	...	1 „
Peas	...	...	...	...	1 „
Steak	...	...	...	...	1 „
Pears	...	...	...	...	1 „
Peaches	...	...	...	...	2 „
Beans	...	...	...	...	1 „
Paste	...	...	...	...	1 Jar
Corned Beef	...	...	...	...	6 lbs.

Licenced Premises.

This year has seen further improvements carried out at these premises. The owners have been pressed to improve sanitary accommodation and washing facilities although inadequate drainage has prevented this being done in some cases. Most premises now do catering either in a very small way or as a considerable part of their business. The same supervision has been given in these cases and it has been possible to considerably improve the living accommodation for the staff concerned. There are a few small premises in the country where the trade is insufficient from an economic point of view for any expenditure on improvements and it is anticipated that within the next 12 months the majority of these houses will be closed.

Food Poisoning.

A case of food poisoning (*Salmonella Typhirmurium*) was reported in one of the parishes. The original case remained a carrier for some time but all other members of the family were found to be clear. Despite diligent investigation it was not possible to determine the vehicle of infection.

A further case was investigated when it was found that some pork pies were the cause. In this instance which occurred in the summer, the pies must have been in a putrid condition by the time they were eaten and consumption of food in such a condition was bound to give rise to serious consequences. Considering the nature of the food it should have been kept in a refrigerator but it is obvious that the householder did not realise the risk that she was running by allowing anyone to consume pies in such a condition and after such unsatisfactory storage.

Rodent Control.

During the early part of the year the Council were without the services of a Rodent Operative. Mr. H. Young, who had served the Council for 12 years in this capacity died in December 1956. Some difficulty was experienced in finding a man to carry out this work until towards the end of April 1957 when the post was filled. The vacancy recurred in September and for the remainder of the year such treatment as was absolutely essential was carried out by the Public Health Officers.

The half-yearly treatment of the sewers was carried out in May with the assistance of workmen loaned by the Engineer's Department. These were found to be generally clear with the exception of minor infestations at Houghton Regis, Eaton Bray and Toddington. It was not possible to resume the treatment of the sewers in the Autumn as has been done for a number of years.

The County Pest Department co-operates closely in all matters where the two authorities are concerned and this makes for more efficient destruction of rats and mice. It has however become evident in recent years that where the combined harvesting methods are adopted rats appear to return to the fields to 'glean' and leave towards the end of October for the cover and warmth provided by dwelling houses. These would formerly have remained close to ricks which might have been erected on agricultural lands and would have been destroyed at the time of threshing operations.

1957
PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949.
REPORT OF INSPECTIONS, ETC.

Type of Property					
	Non-Agricultural				(5) Agricultural
	(1) Local Authority	(2) Dwelling Houses (incl Council Houses)	(3) All other (including Business Premises)	(4) Total of Cols. (1), (2) & (3)	
1. Number of properties in Local Authority's District	42	6829	628	7499	373
2. Number of Properties in- spected as a result of :					
(a) Notification ...	9	76	56	141	11
(b) Survey under the Act	99	851	102	1052	16
(c) Otherwise (e.g. when visited primarily for some other purpose)	2	10	21	33	—
3. Total inspections carried out —including re-inspections ...	—	—	—	—	—
4. Number of Properties in- spected (in Sect. II) which were found to be infested by :					
(a) Rats—Major ...					
Minor ...	4	134	23	61	5
(b) Mice—Major ...					
Minor ...	—	4	2	—	1
Number of Block Control Schemes carried out ...	All Rodent Control work is carried out on "Block Control" principle.				

Other Pests.

The Public Health Officers and the Rodent Operative have also had to give a good deal of advice during the year on the destruction of moles, wasps nests and bees. Where these have returned to dwelling houses in many cases the Council's staff have actually carried out the necessary works of destruction. Before destroying bees, local Bee Keepers are encouraged to save the hives but where they are of opinion that to do so is impossible then the necessary treatment has been resorted to.

**OTHER MATTERS DEALT WITH BY THE PUBLIC HEALTH
DEPARTMENT DURING THE YEAR.**

Infectious Diseases.

Cases reported by the Medical Officer of Health are investigated and every effort is made to trace the source of infection. It is gratifying to report that oftentimes these investigations are not without success and form an important service in the field of preventive medicine.

Petroleum Regulations.

There are 65 Licence holders within the District. All licences expire on the 30th June in each year but before renewing the licence, installations are inspected with special reference to the condition of the petrol tank covers, the ventilating shafts and the condition of tubes and pipes generally.

National Assistance Act 1948.

Care of Old People and Burial of the Dead.

Where elderly people are found to be incapable of caring for themselves and have no relatives living near, conditions are reported to the County Welfare Department. During the year it has been necessary to submit reports with respect to two old persons. In one case arrangements have had to be made for the burial of a person who had died within the District and had no known relatives to arrange the burial.

Public Health Department—Staff.

It gives me great pleasure again to express my sincere thanks to the members of the Staff for the excellent work carried out during the year:—

Mr. R. G. Burch—Additional Public Health Inspector.

Miss E. Joyce—Clerk/Shorthand-Typist.

Mrs. W. Birchmore—Clerk/Shorthand-Typist (Part-time).

I am Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your Obedient Servant,

L. G. HILL,

Senior Public Health Inspector.